



Title: III, Billings and Collections Manual

Chapter: 5, Direct Premium Remittance System (DPRS)

Bulletin: DPRS 04-1, Open Season for DPRS Participants

Date: October 13, 2004

To: Agency Payroll and Personnel Offices

This bulletin notifies payroll and personnel offices that the Direct Premium Remittance System (DPRS) Open Season is November 8 through December 13, 2004, coinciding with the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Open Season for Federal employees.

Certain individuals who are not Federal employees are eligible to participate in the FEHB Program under Public Law (P.L.) as described below:

- P.L. 98-615 (5 USC 8905a), Civil Service Retirement Spouse Equity Act of 1984, provides for the enrollment of certain former spouses of current, retired, or separated Federal employees enrolled in FEHB.
- Title II of P.L. 100-654 (5 USC 8905a), Federal Employees Health Benefits Amendments Act of 1988, provides for temporary continuation of coverage under FEHB for (1) certain individuals who separate from Federal service, (2) children of Federal employees, annuitants, or separated employees already enrolled in FEHB who lose their status as family members, and (3) certain former spouses of current or separated Federal employees or annuitants who would otherwise not be eligible for continued FEHB coverage.
- P.L. 101-303 (5 USC 8906I), Direct Pay Annuitant/Survivors, provides for annuitants/survivors to pay health benefit premiums directly to the National Finance Center (NFC), when the annuity is insufficient to pay the withholdings for the plan in which the annuitant/survivor is enrolled.
- P.L. 102-484, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993, amends the temporary continuation of coverage under FEHB for certain civilian employees of the Department of Defense separated under a reduction in force.
- P.L. 104-106, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996, amends the temporary continuation of coverage under FEHB to cover employees who voluntarily separate from surplus positions.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recommends NFC as the central office for collecting and processing premiums from non-Federal FEHB enrollees. When an agency contracts to use NFC's services, the agency's P.L. 98-615, P.L. 100-654, P.L. 101-303, P.L. 102-484, and P.L. 104-106 accounts are processed through DPRS. Each year, DPRS provides an open season to allow current enrollees to change plans.

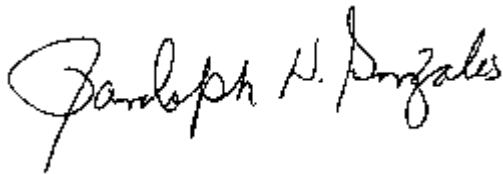
All DPRS open season processing is handled directly by the DPRS Billing Unit at NFC. NFC will notify DPRS enrollees of the open season and will provide them with all open season materials, including Form SF-2809, Open Season Health Benefits Registration Form, and a list of the health plans available in the state of their mailing address. DPRS enrollees making changes in coverage will send the SF-2809 directly to NFC for processing.

Although payroll and personnel offices are not required to perform any action **for current DPRS enrollees**, these offices should discuss open season with new enrollees who submit their enrollment forms after **November 1, 2004**. These enrollees will **not** be included on the DPRS database at the beginning of open season and, therefore, will not receive any open season information from NFC. **Therefore, payroll and personnel offices should ensure that:**

1. These enrollees have selected plans that will be available in 2005.
2. If a plan will not be available in 2005, the enrollee **must** complete another SF-2809 with the notation **Open Season Change** typed and highlighted on the top of the form. The enrollee or personnel office must submit the Open Season Change form to the DPRS Billing Unit during the open season period. The enrollee should understand that the **open season change is effective January 1, 2005**. If the change is processed after January 1, 2005, the effective date of coverage and the billing date will be retroactive to January 1, 2005.
3. These enrollees understand the cost of their plans during 2005. Open season information is available in the appropriate 2005 FEHB Guides.
4. If selecting a health maintenance organization (HMO), the enrollee meets the special enrollment requirements of the plan, such as the exact enrollment area.

For questions about the DPRS open season, enrollees should call **1-800-242-9630** . NFC provides this number to DPRS enrollees with the notification of open season dates.

For questions about DPRS, payroll and personnel offices should call the DPRS Billing Unit at **504-255-5990** .



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